

U S ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
 POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT  
 Soper Avenue Groundwater Site - Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
 Region V

**Subject:** POLREP #2  
 Progress  
 Soper Avenue Groundwater Site  
 C595  
 Rockford, IL  
 Latitude: 42.2882979 Longitude: -89.1241901



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**Date:** 1/6/2012

**Reporting Period:** 10/29/2010 to 01/06/2012

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background

<b>Site Number:</b>	C595	<b>Contract Number:</b>	EP-S5-09-05
<b>D.O. Number:</b>	Task Order 86	<b>Action Memo Date:</b>	
<b>Response Authority:</b>	CERCLA	<b>Response Type:</b>	Time-Critical
<b>Response Lead:</b>	EPA	<b>Incident Category:</b>	Removal Action
<b>NPL Status:</b>	Non NPL	<b>Operable Unit:</b>	
<b>Mobilization Date:</b>	10/27/2011	<b>Start Date:</b>	10/19/2011
<b>Demob Date:</b>		<b>Completion Date:</b>	
<b>CERCLIS ID:</b>	ILN000510656	<b>RCRIS ID:</b>	
<b>ERNS No.:</b>		<b>State Notification:</b>	LPC#2012085009
<b>FPN#:</b>		<b>Reimbursable Account #:</b>	

#### 1.1.1 Incident Category

Time-Critical Removal Action

#### 1.1.2 Site Description

Benzene contamination and other chemicals typical found in fuels such as gasoline were discovered in private wells in June 2011 on Soper Avenue and Alliance Avenue north of Auburn Street and west of Central Avenue in the northwest portion of Rockford.

Winnebago County Health Department and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) worked together to collect samples from private wells in the area on three occasions during June, August and September after being informed of fuel-like odors from private well water. Contaminants discovered in some private wells are from a family of chemicals known as volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that are commonly found in fuels such as gasoline, diesel and home heating fuel. The most recent set of well water samples was taken on September 14, 2011. Twenty-five wells have been tested in all, some more than once.

The state and county health departments' primary role is to insure that people who have private wells are aware of the risks associated with using the groundwater. The two agencies have been interpreting private well test results the past three months and explaining to well users any potential health implications. Illinois EPA's role is to investigate the source or sources of the groundwater contamination to determine whether the source or sources can be cleaned up or effectively stopped from contributing to groundwater contamination. The agencies are working together to determine the extent of any risk to public health and the source(s) of the contamination.

Illinois EPA is requesting assistance from U.S. EPA to provide alternative drinking water supplies for residential homes that have exceeded MCLs (Maximum Contaminant Level) for benzene.

#### **1.1.2.1 Location**

The Area of Concern (AOC) is located in the Northwest side of Rockford, Winnebago County, Illinois. After the initial notification to Winnebago Health Dept. concerning odors in private wells, the County held an informational meeting with the Illinois Dept. of Public Health (IDPH) for residents to gather information on contamination and sign up for testing. Based on sampling results the scope of the area has been limited to private wells in the area of Johnston Avenue to the West; Alliance Avenue to the East; Auburn Street to the South; and Parkside Avenue to the North.

#### **1.1.2.2 Description of Threat**

Currently four residents in the AOC exceed the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for Benzene of 5 ppb, with the highest level detected of 1300 ppb. Exposure to benzene at the levels found in the area private wells over long periods of time may lead to disorders of the blood and bone marrow system, such as anemia, and may increase the lifetime risk of cancer.

#### **1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results**

Winnebago County Health Department and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) worked together to collect samples from private wells in the area on three occasions during June, August and September after being informed of fuel-like odors from private well water. Contaminants discovered in some private wells are from a family of chemicals known as volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that are commonly found in fuels such as gasoline, diesel and home heating fuel. The most recent set of well water samples was taken on September 14, 2011. Twenty-five wells have been tested in all, some more than once.

Current assessment results indicate that four residents exceed the MCL for benzene of 5 ppb. Additionally, other VOCs were detected including Ethyl Benzene, Xylene, Toluene. IEPA is continuing their investigation to determine the potential source of the contamination, with the installation of various monitoring wells to determine groundwater direction, and potential contaminant sources.

## **2. Current Activities**

### **2.1 Operations Section**

#### **2.1.1 Narrative**

IEPA is conducting a field investigation, installing approximately 9 monitoring wells in the AOC, and sampling additional locations which may be potential sources, and residents that are experiencing water concerns.

EPA plans to conduct a vapor intrusion assessment to determine if the level of contaminants in the

groundwater are potentially impacting residences due to vapor intrusion pathway.

### 2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

EPA continues to provide bottled water to five residents to date, four are exceeding the MCL for benzene and one appears to be contaminated with a strong organic odor. Four residents are located on Soper Ave. and one on Auburn St.

IEPA continued their investigation on 11/21-22/2011, sampling wells on the Mobil property and the 3 wells IEPA installed. A new monitor point was installed at the SW corner of the Citgo Tank farm and additional points near the old Citgo tank farm were abandoned due to refusal. Sample results continue to show extensive BTEX contamination in the AOC.

EPA began working on the Action Memo to fund connection of up to 16 residences to the Rockford CWS.

EPA sent out information packages to the 16 homeowners offering connection to the CWS, along with an acceptance form and access consent form. As of 1/6/2012, 14 of the 16 homeowners have accepted the offer from EPA. The two remaining homes, one is vacant and apparently bank owned, and the other has currently refused the connection offer.

On Dec. 5, 2010, an availability session was held at the Winnebago Health Department office to provide additional information and answer any questions the homeowners and or tenants had for officials.

City of Rockford is possibly able to offer financial assistance to homeowners that may need plumbing upgrades to connect to the CWS. City officials planned to talk with homeowners between 12/27 and 12/30/2010.

On 12/21/2011, EPA conducted a vapor intrusion assessment at 6 residences, to determine if benzene vapors had the potential to impact residential air quality. Samples were collected on Soper Ave., Alliance Ave. and Wilshire Ave. Two samples were from dirt crawl spaces and four were sub-slab samples. Initial results currently do not indicate a benzene vapor problem in the AOC. A follow-up indoor air sample will be conducted at the home on Alliance Ave. as a new contaminant was identified (PCE) which exceeded the sub-slab screening level.

### 2.1.3 Enforcement Activities, Identity of Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs)

The IEPA investigation may lead to Potentially Responsible Parties as the source of the contamination.

### 2.1.4 Progress Metrics

Not Applicable

<i>Waste Stream</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Manifest #</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Disposal</i>

## 2.2 Planning Section

### 2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

U.S. EPA will continue to provide bottled water and will initiate actions to connect residents in the AOC to the public water supply.

#### 2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

Complete sign-off of Action Memo to fund removal action

Award bid to contractor to initiate work.

Continue to investigate vapor intrusion issues as necessary

Continue to work with IEPA on future site investigation work.

Connect residents to public water supply, disconnect private well and close well if required by County Health Dept

#### **2.2.1.2 Next Steps**

Award construction work to low bidder when funding has been approved

Conduct indoor air sampling at residence on Alliance Ave.

IEPA will continue investigation at the Citgo Station, attempting to identify location and extent of release at the former tank pit.

#### **2.2.2 Issues**

Possible issues involve the ability of residents to pay monthly water bills to City, and possible annexation problems if the residents agree to the connection.

### **2.3 Logistics Section**

Task Order has been issued to Environmental Restoration to perform the Removal Action. Bids have been received from three local plumbing contractors. Selected contractor will provide all personnel and equipment to complete the scope of work.

### **2.4 Finance Section**

#### **2.4.1 Narrative**

Current Removal Action is funded for \$2,500 to provide bottled water. Additional funding will be added to perform the anticipated water connections. Action Memo is currently in sign-off.

### **2.5 Other Command Staff**

#### **2.5.1 Safety Officer**

ATSDR is currently assisting with the removal action providing input on health concerns

#### **2.5.2 Liaison Officer**

Not Applicable

#### **2.5.3 Information Officer**

Cheryl Allen is the CIC, and is working with the Local, State and County personnel. A Fact Sheet has currently been distributed. The Availability Session was held on Dec. 5, 2010. A CIP is being drafted for the Site

## **3. Participating Entities**

### **3.1 Unified Command**

U.S. EPA, IEPA, IDPH and Winnebago Health will comprise the Unified Command.

### **3.2 Cooperating Agencies**

ATSDR  
City of Rockford

**4. Personnel On Site**

OSC - 1  
Weston - 1  
ERRS - 1

**5. Definition of Terms**

No information available at this time.

**6. Additional sources of information**

**6.1 Internet location of additional information/report**

[www.epaosc.net/SoperAvenueGroundwater](http://www.epaosc.net/SoperAvenueGroundwater)

[sfuller@wchd.gov](mailto:sfuller@wchd.gov)

[carol.fuller@illinois.gov](mailto:carol.fuller@illinois.gov)

[allen.cheryl@epa.gov](mailto:allen.cheryl@epa.gov)

**6.2 Reporting Schedule**

Anticipate weekly SitReps

**7. Situational Reference Materials**

Northwest Rockford Area of Fuel Contaminated Groundwater Fact Sheet